

## The Gulls of Hart Crane

Turning, they wheel and dip suddenly to spumy crosses  
on the bashed waves.

Wheeling, their wings eternal blades above the raw salt  
air, they dive for the emerald song of  
gambler's bone

Dipped wings through bloody sunset, where the waves  
run crazy  
and the sea divides, they dive thru whirlpools  
of your song

Through all the bones and peonies we weave together  
and sift  
to claws and harrows

Through the last conspiracy of eight year olds  
("Le Fauve")  
to rise from windows with the walls  
gone, on spray of severed cables

Up in gliding arcs, as recompense for roses and the  
chisled  
stoney mound, disappearing through the  
rhetoric of moonlight.

## Driving Around Through 1922

-- for King Vidor

Sundays the dead come struggling  
up through old mud flows of 1922  
cinematography: the eyes and bulk of Roscoe  
Arbuckle resting in a can in Beverly Hills  
his unreleased face stored in a dusty vault.

Houses shift to houses then to houses  
(star's residence to brothel to rest home  
on Adams Blvd.)  
A boat and Buster Keaton go  
in and out the window projected by a 1922  
projector.

It is Mabel Normand's birthday.  
I have the cake set out with candles  
under Aspen branch with the best champagne.  
I have her picture on a wall



owned by Ben Turpin  
who has lost his name next to her  
on the wall, crossed eye watching shadows  
build beneath the piano.

It is Mabel Normand's birthday at William  
Desmond Taylor's grave and on the lawn at Picfair,  
in Chaplin's Switzerland, in the bedroom  
of Sam Goldwyn. I cut the cake for Bessie Love,  
for Mae Marsh, May Murray,  
for Rod LaRoque and Vilma Banky,  
for the guys who murdered Wallace Reid.  
I eat for them. Miss Banky speaks the names  
in a faded Swedish  
lace. Up the hill is Picfair  
walled in with Wallace Stevens trees;  
it looks down on both sides  
of the day.

Near Sunset is the place Fatty  
holed up in after his victory  
(one of those L.A. birthdaycake apartments --  
white cream balconies  
phony Moorish arches.)

I have a champagne on the Strip  
looking down at Fatty. I order one all around:  
for the whole gang: for Pola Negri and Charles Ray,  
for Clara Bow and Al St John.  
Here's to you and you and you.  
It's Mabel Normand's birthday.

A R A N G E   O F   P O E M S :

T A O   t o   T I B E T /

P R O U S T   t o   P R O V E N C E /

C R A N E   t o   K E A T O N /

b y   B E N   P L E A S A N T S /

B E V E R L Y   H I L L S /

C A L I F O R N I A